

# **Classical Conceptions of Citizenship**

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# Classical Conceptions of Citizenship

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LIBERAL

COMMUNITARIANISM

REPUBLICAN

# Liberal Conception

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- Liberal conception takes the **individual as the main focus**.
- A liberal theory of citizenship emphasizes **the equality of rights** which each citizen holds, and how these rights enable the individual to pursue their aims and goals.

# Communitarianism Conception

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- Communitarianism is critical of liberal conception.
- For communitarians, the individual does not exist prior to the **community**.
- As such, it argues that the liberal theory fails to consider duty or loyalty to the community, ignores the social nature of individuals and, in emphasizing rights, ignores responsibilities and duties owed to the community.

# Republican Conception

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- It emphasizes participation in **government** as the foundation for the promotion of the civic good.
- It is critical of both the liberal perspective, which it sees as too fragmentary, and also, the communitarian view, as **it is wary of local identities** being placed above wider civic goals.

# Source:

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- Michael Lister and Emily Pia (2008). [Citizenship in Contemporary Europe](#).  
Edinburgh: [Edinburgh University Press](#)